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Construction Industry News from City Hall

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Permits over the Internet

In mid-December 2002, the Office of Central Inspection will begin a series of information technology upgrades and enhancements.

OCI will be implementing a major upgrade to its current automated tracking system for plan review, permit issuance and inspection scheduling. At nearly the same time, OCI will be upgrading its automated “*interactive telephone voice response system*”, currently called TELUS. These changes are tentatively scheduled for the weekend of December 14th and 15th, and perhaps into the week of December 16th.

The above upgrades will allow OCI to proceed with implementation of Internet, on-line permitting (some simple permits such as roofing/siding, single family remodeling, many trade permits, etc.), inspection scheduling, and permit and/or inspection status reviews. We also hope to make available on-line permit reports and standard forms. Further, we hope to make on-line payment for permits an option, if not in the initial phase, in a later phase. Phase I implementation is scheduled to occur in late first quarter of 2003 or in the second quarter of 2003. We will be working with representatives of the design and construction industry in the design and testing of the new system.

Later phases of the Internet system will hopefully include the ability to submit and issue permits for residential additions and new construction (including simple site plans), contractor/certificate license renewals, and status review of recently approved or pending Metropolitan Area Planning Department cases.

We will keep you posted on our progress.

Kurt Schroeder

Outdoor Receptacles

Dwelling Unit Outdoor Receptacles

Section **210-52 (e)** of the 1999 National Electrical Code reads as follows:

“Outdoor Outlets. For a one-family dwelling and each unit of a two-family dwelling that is at grade level, at least one receptacle outlet accessible at grade level and not more than 6 ½ feet above grade shall be installed at the front and back of the dwelling. See Section 210-8(a)(1).”

This section of the Code requires two outside receptacle outlets be installed (one in front and one in back) of each one-family, and each unit of a two-family dwelling. These required receptacle outlets are also required to be located not more than 6 ½ feet above grade and in addition they must be accessible (“admitting close approach”) by a person standing at grade (NEC 100-Definitions).

An outdoor receptacle outlet that is located not more than 6 ½ feet above grade, but can only be reached by leaving grade level and walking onto a deck or other platform does not meet the NEC requirement of being accessible at grade level.

Wayne L. Bolen

Construction Inspection Supervisor, Electrical/Elevator

Water Tap Fees

Water tap fees are scheduled to increase from the current \$500 for a one inch connection to \$675 effective January 1, 2003. These fees are for the actual cost of service installations and should not be confused with Plant Equity Fees, which may be described as a system buy in fee.

When the City Council considered tap fee increases in 2002, there was recognition that the fees had not increased for almost a decade and that the fees in effect did not begin to cover the full cost of installation. In recognition of the period of time since the last increase, Council chose to phase in the implementation of full cost recovery on tap fees over a three year period. The first year was set at \$500; the second at \$675; and the third at \$850. There was an understanding, however, that the actual installation costs for taps would be examined prior to the implementation of the rate for the third year and that the rate would be adjusted accordingly.

It should be noted that the City incorporates use of their own personnel as well as contracted labor for the installation of taps. Costs for the City to install services are somewhat lower in general than the costs incurred for contracted service installation. However, the use of contractors allows more flexible response to changes in demand for service installations.

Also as a result of the discussions on tap fees prior to the increase, staff of the Water & Sewer Department committed to working with industry representatives on revisions to the tap application and scheduling process. The result of these discussions was a change in payment procedures which provided for payment of all fees to Central Inspection at the time of building permit issuance and the change to a scheduling system based on the concept of “foundation releases”. These changes, initiated in August of 2002, are expected to result in more efficient application and scheduling and help to hold down costs and improve service.

Upcoming Changes to Storm Water Quality Program

In the early 1990's, Phase I of EPA's storm water quality regulations went into effect. This phase of the storm water program required municipalities over 100,000 in population to obtain an NPDES storm water discharge permit and implement storm water management programs. Phase I also required owners and operators of construction sites that would disturb 5 acres or more of land to obtain a federal/state storm water discharge permit prior to the beginning of construction.

Beginning on March 10, 2003, Phase II of the storm water regulations will take effect.

The Phase II program will impact many small communities and political jurisdiction, including all of those located within the Wichita metropolitan area. The impacted communities will be required to obtain discharge permits and implement storm water management programs as the Phase I communities have been required to do, including construction site erosion control. In addition, the Phase II regulations require that the owners and contractors working on construction sites disturbing more than 1 acre of ground obtain a federal/state storm water discharge permit. For the smaller construction sites between 1 acres and 5 acres in size, it may be possible to obtain a waiver from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment depending on construction site location and the time of year the construction will take place. The Phase II rules allows permitting authorities to waive the NPDES permit requirements for these smaller sites if the value of the rainfall erosivity factor is less than 5 during the period of construction activity. There is an Erosivity Index Calculator located on the Internet at <http://srph.brc.tamus.edu/epa/>. This is an unofficial calculator but should provide the user a general idea on whether or not a particular project will require a permit. For more information on the Erosivity Factor, see EPA Rainfall Erosivity Waiver Fact Sheet 3.1 (EPA-833-F-00-014).

The City of Wichita, Storm Water Management Office has discussed with KDHE the possibility of simplifying the waiver requirements for construction projects in Sedgwick County. So far, the only thing that we have determined is that *only very short-term construction projects during the winter months* might be eligible for the waiver. By in large, most construction projects will require a permit. Owners, developers, engineers, architects and others involved in the construction process should start planning for these additional permit requirements. If you have any questions, you can contact the City's Storm Water Management Office at 268-4498.



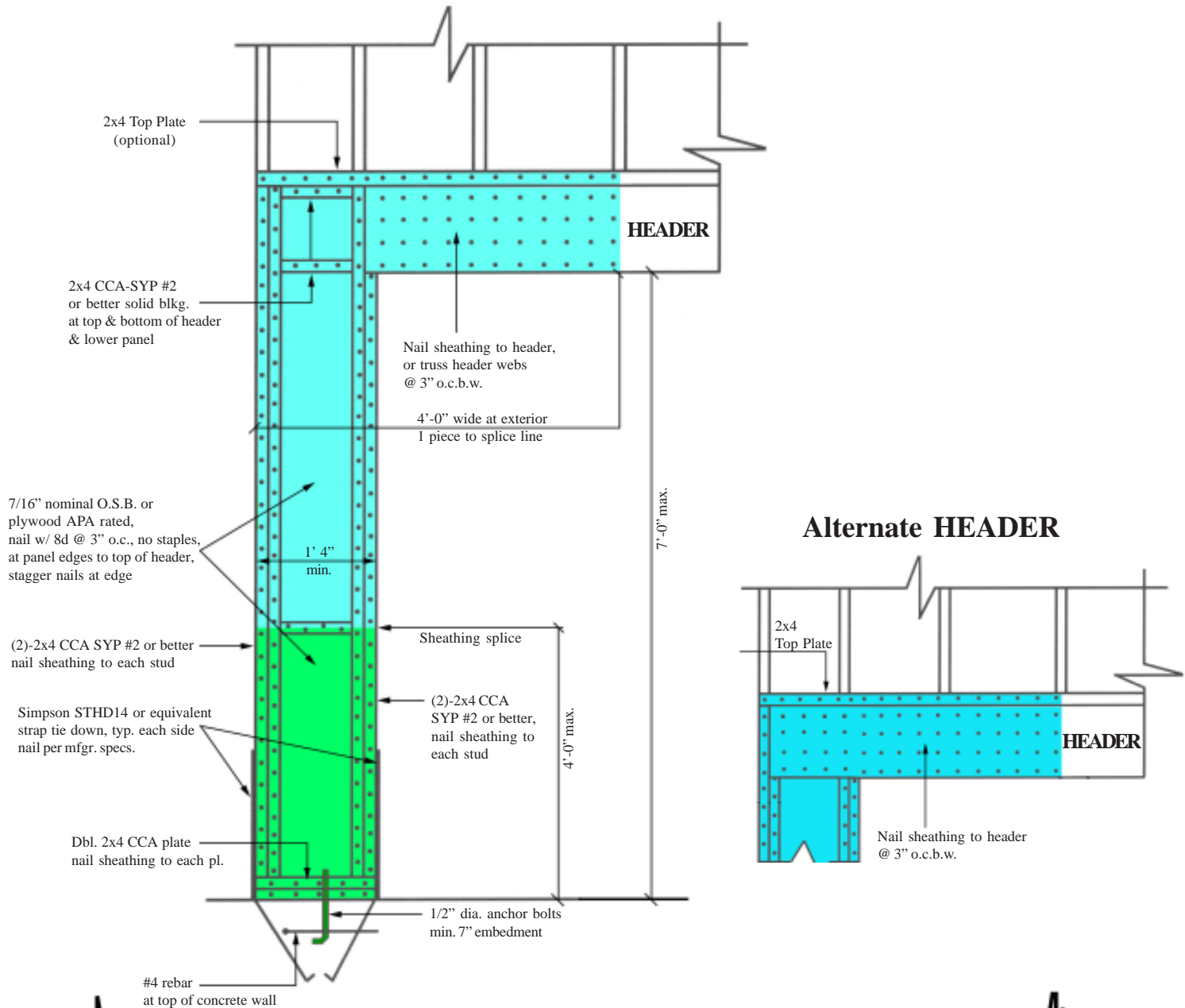
Construction and Project Development Sign Permits

It has recently been brought to our attention that construction signs are being installed without sign permits as required by the sign code. Construction contractors that install construction signs on job sites are required to obtain sign permits prior to the sign installation. Only a licensed sign hanger can obtain that permit and all sign permits must detail the location, size, height, and any other pertinent information for that location. *No signs are allowed to be located on city right-of-way!* Permit fee is \$25 base plus \$6 for each 10 square feet or fraction thereof rounding up to the next 10 square feet in size.

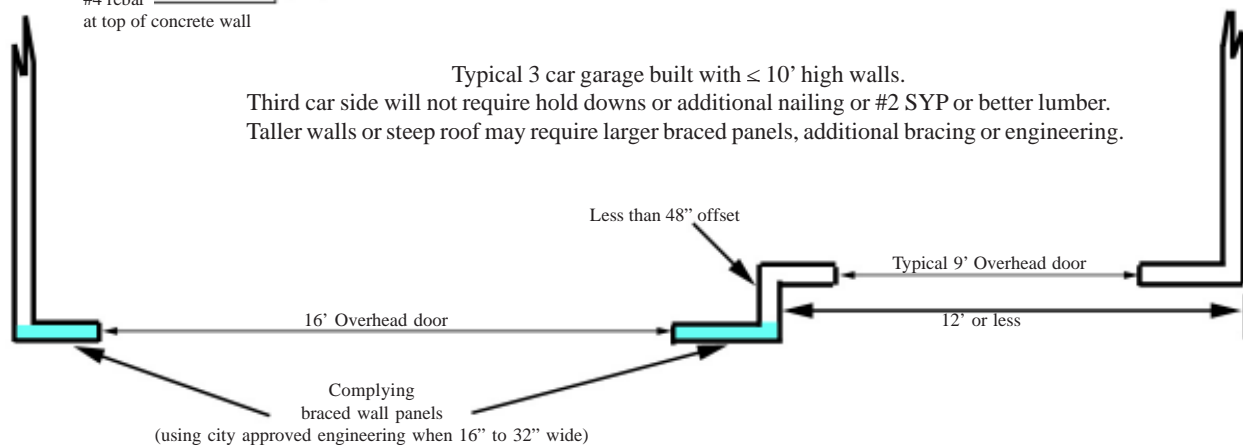
General Contractors may choose to become their own sign contractor and do their own installation or hire a sign company to pull the necessary permit and install the sign. Requirements to be a licensed sign hanger include a \$100.00 licensing fee and a \$2000 bond, but no testing as with other licensures. If you wish to discuss the previous information, or to become licensed and install your own signs; please contact the Sign Section, Office of Central Inspection @ 268-4479. Ask for Randy Sparkman, Pat Longwell, Dick Jonker or J.R. Cox.

Braced Wall Panel at Garage Door

The Board of Code Standards and Appeals has approved a standard design that may be used in lieu of the requirements found in the building codes regarding braced walls requirements for garage return walls less than 32 inches. Builders may use this standard, one of the methods found in the building codes or opt to have an engineer design a bracing method specific to their needs. These requirements are being enforced on the braced wall inspection (315) on all permits issued after April 2, 2002.



Typical 3 car garage built with $\leq 10'$ high walls.
Third car side will not require hold downs or additional nailing or #2 SYP or better lumber.
Taller walls or steep roof may require larger braced panels, additional bracing or engineering.



All Contractors:

Per the International Building Code, addresses are required to be posted prior to starting any work. When an inspector from another area has to fill in for the regular inspector, this will more than likely be a new area to him. Also, we have had some work done by Contractors at the wrong address because of the structure not being properly marked. It is pertinent that addresses be properly displayed.

HVAC Contractors:

The 2000 IMC is now in effect. Please note a couple of changes that may affect you.

1. Duct detectors are required to be in the return.
2. Bathroom Exhaust fans must be vented to the outside in all buildings.
Note: Ran into the attic and terminating at a properly ventilated soffit would be considered as outside. Terminating in the attic will not be allowed.
3. Dryer ducts are required to be installed as required by the 2000 IMC. This section was not amended.

Plumbing / Sewer Contractors:

As you should know by now, we are under the 2000 UPC. Please note the following:

1. All underground piping must be properly bedded. Pipes supported by clods, rocks, bricks and such will not be permitted.
2. Nail protectors for DVW and water piping are required and must be installed before the rough inspection is made.
3. Safe pans for water heaters are more stringent in the 2000 UPC and must be installed as required by code. This pertains to **new and replacements**.
4. Unions are required on hot and cold water lines of water heaters.
5. Water heaters must be sized according to the chart in the 2000 UPC.

As always, if there is questions or doubt about a new code, please call and get a clarification before doing the Job. Thanks for your cooperation.

Dan Leidy,
Construction Inspection Supervisor Plumbing/Mechanical Section

TELUS Requests AM/PM/NO PREFERENCE

When users of the TELUS system schedule an inspection, they are given a choice of AM/PM or NO PREFERENCE for their inspection(s) to be done. Please be reminded that the AM/PM are a preferred time and not always possible to do. What happens is that inspectors are leaving in the morning with 20+ inspections and 90% are requested for the same 1/2 of the day. Inspectors will prioritize their inspections and do their best to accommodate contractors, but **AM/PM requests are only a preference and not an appointment or a guarantee**. If there is a special circumstance that you need a definite AM or PM, call that morning before 8:30 and let the inspector for that area know.

(This is not a change, just a timely reprint from Cinch July 1997 and May 1994.)



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WICHITA

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